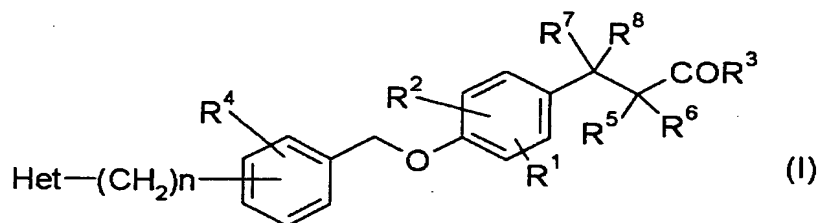


Claims

1. A compound represented by the formula:



5

wherein Het is an optionally substituted heterocyclic group,
N is 0 or 1,

R¹ and R² are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom,
a C₁₋₆ alkyl group or a halogen atom,

10 R³ is an optionally substituted hydroxy group or an optionally
substituted amino group,

R⁴ is a hydrogen atom, an optionally substituted hydrocarbon
group, an optionally substituted hydroxy group or an
optionally substituted amino group,

15 R⁵ and R⁶ are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom,
a C₁₋₆ alkyl group or a halogen atom, and

R⁷ and R⁸ are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom,
a C₁₋₆ alkyl group, a halogen atom or an optionally substituted
hydroxy group,

20 or a salt thereof (except

4-[[3-(2-pyrazinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,
methyl 4-[[3-(2-pyrazinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,
methyl 4-[[3-[5-(trifluoromethyl)-2-

25 4-[[3-[5-(trifluoromethyl)-2-
pyridinyl]phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,

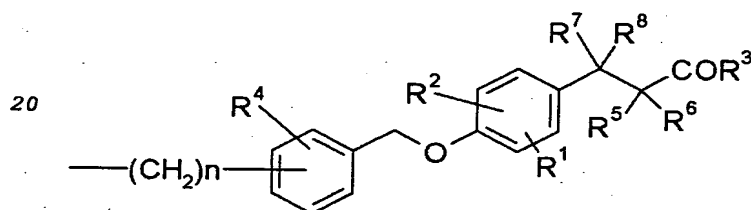
4-[[3-(2-thiazolyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,
methyl 4-[[3-(2-thiazolyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,
4-[[3-(1H-pyrrol-1-yl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,

30 methyl 4-[[3-(1H-pyrrol-1-yl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,

4-[[3-(3-furyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,
 methyl 4-[[3-(3-furyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,
 4-[[3-(5-pyrimidinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,
 4-[[3-(2-pyridinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,
 5 methyl 4-[[3-(2-pyridinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,
 4-[[3-(2-pyrimidinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,
 methyl 4-[[3-(2-pyrimidinyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,
 4-[[3-(2-thienyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid,
 methyl 4-[[3-(2-thienyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate,
 10 4-[[3-(2-thienyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoic acid and
 methyl 4-[[3-(2-thienyl)phenyl]methoxy]benzenepropanoate).

2. A prodrug of a compound of claim 1.

15 3. A compound of claim 1, wherein the heterocyclic group
 represented by Het is a heterocyclic group containing at least
 one nitrogen atom as a ring-constituting atom and the nitrogen
 atom is bonded to a group represented by the following
 formula:



wherein each symbol is as defined in claim 1.

4. A compound of claim 1, wherein R³ is a hydroxy group.

5. A compound of claim 1, wherein n is 1.

6. A compound of claim 1, wherein R¹ and R² are the same or
 different and each is a hydrogen atom or a halogen atom.

7. A compound of claim 1, wherein R⁴ is a hydrogen atom or a C₁-

6 alkoxy group.

8. A compound of claim 1, wherein R⁵ and R⁶ are hydrogen atoms.

5 9. A compound of claim 1, wherein R⁷ and R⁸ are hydrogen atoms.

10. A compound of claim 1, which is 3-(4-([3-(1-benzothiophen-3-yl)benzyl]oxy)phenyl)propanoic acid;

3-(4-([3-(2-methyl-3,4-dihydroquinolin-1(2H)-yl)benzyl]oxy)phenyl)propanoic acid;

3-[4-([4-[(2-phenyl-1H-indol-1-yl)methyl]benzyl]oxy)phenyl]propanoic acid;

3-[2-fluoro-4-([4-[(2-phenyl-1H-indol-1-yl)methyl]benzyl]oxy)phenyl]propanoic acid;

15 3-[4-([4-[(2,5-diphenyl-1H-pyrrol-1-yl)methyl]benzyl]oxy)phenyl]propanoic acid;

3-(4-([4-([5-(2-phenylethyl)-3-[4-(trifluoromethyl)phenyl]-1H-pyrazol-1-yl)methyl]benzyl]oxy)phenyl)propanoic acid;

3-[4-([4-[(3,5-diphenyl-1H-pyrazol-1-yl)methyl]benzyl]oxy)phenyl]propanoic acid;

3-{4-[(4-([3-tert-butyl-5-(phenoxymethyl)-1H-pyrazol-1-yl)methyl]benzyl]oxy]-2-fluorophenyl}propanoic acid;

3-{4-[(4-([5-(benzyloxy)-3-tert-butyl-1H-pyrazol-1-yl)methyl]benzyl]oxy)-2-fluorophenyl}propanoic acid;

25 3-(4-([4-([3-tert-butyl-5-[(6-methylpyridin-2-yl)methoxy]-1H-pyrazol-1-yl)methyl]benzyl]oxy)-2-fluorophenyl)propanoic acid or a salt thereof.

11. A GPR40 receptor function modulator comprising a compound
30 of claim 1 or a prodrug thereof.

12. An insulin secretagogue comprising a compound of claim 1 or a prodrug thereof.

13. A pharmaceutical agent comprising a compound of claim 1 or a prodrug thereof.
14. A pharmaceutical agent of claim 13, which is an agent for
5 the prophylaxis or treatment of diabetes.
15. Use of a compound of claim 1 or a prodrug thereof for the production of a GPR40 receptor function modulator.
- 10 16. Use of a compound of claim 1 or a prodrug thereof for the production of an insulin secretagogue.
17. Use of a compound of claim 1 or a prodrug thereof for the production of an agent for the prophylaxis or treatment of
15 diabetes.
18. A method of modulating a GPR40 receptor function in a mammal, which comprises administering an effective amount of a compound of claim 1 or a prodrug thereof to the mammal.
20
19. A method of promoting insulin secretion in a mammal, which comprises administering an effective amount of a compound of claim 1 or a prodrug thereof to the mammal.
- 25 20. A method for the prophylaxis or treatment of diabetes in a mammal, which comprises administering an effective amount of a compound of claim 1 or a prodrug thereof to the mammal.